



Chapter 14: State Special Schools

SECTION A: STATE SPECIAL SCHOOLS

SECTION B: DIAGNOSTIC CENTERS

Introduction

California School for the Blind and California School for the Deaf were established to provide a comprehensive educational program for children in need of extensive specialized services due to impairments in vision and/or hearing. Placement in state special schools pursuant to Education Code §§ 59020 and 59120, is made as a result of recommendations from the child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, upon a finding that no appropriate placement is available within the local plan area.

According to California Education Code § 56326, a child can be referred for further assessment by the California School for the Deaf or Blind, or the Diagnostic Centers. This assessment, however, does not constitute placement in the state special schools. This information, along with other relevant factors, would assist the IEP team in their decision-making process regarding the most appropriate placement for the child.

Section A - State Special Schools

California Education Code § 59001. The California School for the Deaf is part of the public school system of the state except that it derives no revenue from the State School Fund, and has for its object the education of the deaf, who because of their severe hearing loss and educational needs, cannot be provided an appropriate educational program and related services in the regular public schools.

California School for the Deaf, Riverside (CSDR) is a state special school that serves hearing-impaired children between the ages of three and 21, who live in Southern California. Both residential and day programs are available for eligible children. CSDR staff members work closely with local school districts to collaborate and provide children who are hard of hearing or deaf with the state-adopted curriculum, standards, and student performance outcomes.

California School for the Blind's mission is to provide a comprehensive educational program to California students who are visually impaired, deaf-blind, and visually impaired/multi-

handicapped from infancy through age 21. Both residential and day programs are available to assist eligible children to lead vocationally, personally, and socially satisfying lives that are productive and at their highest level of independence.

Rationale for State School Referral

- Documentation must exist that no local education agency (LEA) or county program exists where the child's needs can be met appropriately, even with modifications; or
- Documentation must indicate that LEA or county staff cannot adequately assess the child's ability, functional levels, and learning potential.

Prerequisites to State School Referral

All local public resources must be investigated and proven inappropriate by the IEP team. This documentation should include all modifications that have been made to help the child be successful in the least restrictive environment.

IEP Meetings for Possible State School Placement

The IEP team members shall review all available data relative to assessment, modification to current program, program needs, local program options, and state school programs.

Based on the information presented, the IEP team may recommend and make a referral for any of the following:

- Additional assessment(s),
- A LEA or county operated program within the Desert/Mountain SELPA,
- A public program outside the Desert/Mountain SELPA, or
- A state school:
 - a) California School for the Deaf, Riverside, or
 - b) California School for the Blind, Fremont.

Referral Process

The following steps represent the process for a referral to a state special school:

- If all resources and options have been exhausted, the IEP team makes a referral directly to the state school. Transportation required to attend CSDR is scheduled through the Desert/Mountain SELPA via the Program Manager Due Process department.
- The LEA will provide a copy of the state school referral to the Desert/Mountain SELPA (to the MIS Analyst) so that the SELPA is able to keep track those students who attend state schools for LEA IEP invitation and attendance only.

Section B - Diagnostic Centers

California Education Code § 59201. The diagnostic centers are a part of the public school system of the state, except that they derive no revenue from the State School Fund. The diagnostic centers provide services, including pupil assessment, consultation, technical assistance, and training, to school districts, county offices of education, and special education local plan areas.

The Diagnostic Centers, which were established nearly 50 years ago, are the California Department of Education's (CDE) foremost providers of specialized services and assistance to students with disabilities, their families, and LEAs. The Diagnostic Centers provide high quality assessments to hundreds of students each year and conduct valued training programs for thousands of educators and families across the State of California. The services offered include assessment, technical assistance, transition services, and staff development training.

The Referral Process

Referrals to the Diagnostic Centers are accepted from LEAs and may be made if a child is making inadequate progress. The Diagnostic Centers provide in-depth information regarding the learning styles, behavioral needs, and academic needs of children by providing assessment service and support, after local resources have been exhausted. Assessments may occur at the center or the LEA depending on the needs of the child. A team of Diagnostic Center staff members work in collaboration with local educators and the child's parents to provide in-depth information to assist with decision-making regarding a child's needs. In addition to assessment services, the Diagnostic Centers offer technical assistance, consultation, and staff development. There is no cost for Diagnostic Center services to the referring agency or parent.

Referrals are only accepted from LEAs and may be made if:

- A child is making inadequate progress despite utilization of all LEA resources; and /or
- A child has complex behavioral and/or learning profiles and assessment needs that cannot be addressed locally by the LEA.

Diagnostic Center Service Description

A description of the Diagnostic Center services follows:

1. Assessment services and technical assistance are dynamic, transdisciplinary processes. The Diagnostic Centers utilize expert teams of assessment specialists. A team may include an educational specialist, a language speech and hearing pathologist, a school psychologist, a clinical psychologist, a transition specialist, a pediatrician, or a motor specialist. Assessments are carefully planned and include a dynamic individualized process with educationally relevant diagnostic questions. The outcome is a student profile with a specialized intervention plan that includes strategies and programming options.

- Assessments and locations vary. A child may have an individual field-based assessment at the local school. The assessment may be given at the Diagnostic Center, or, the child may be assessed at both environments. A group assessment could be a part of a field-based model, which would include issues of service delivery, intervention design, behavior, and curriculum as applicable to the group with which the child interacts.
 - Parent collaboration is valued and becomes an integral part of the assessment process. Parents assume an active role in the team process through input during the referral, through extensive interviews with the Diagnostic Center's assessment staff, and actually participate during portions of the assessment.
 - At the completion of the individual assessment Diagnostic Center staff often meets with parents and LEA staff to provide findings, provide practical teaching strategies, and plan interventions. A comprehensive written report accompanies this review.
 - Implementation of the assessment findings occurs as the Diagnostic Center staff provides technical assistance to the IEP team. Direct support may be provided to the classroom teacher and other support specialists. If requested, staff demonstrates recommended strategies, interventions, or methodologies, as well as assists with development of behavioral intervention systems. Additionally, a large selection of resource materials and handouts may be of assistance to the LEA and/or parents for implementation of the ideas and strategies outlined in the report.
2. Transition services and resources for children ages 16-22 with disabilities, their families, and service or care providers. These services facilitate an outcome-driven transition process for the child. Services promote a student focused process based upon student empowerment and informed decisions. Student decisions and family plans lead to meaningful employment and/or adult living that are commensurate with the child's interests, abilities, and aptitudes.
- Transition services include: assessment, consultation, training, and technical assistance on specific transition issues for LEAs, WorkAbility I Project, Juvenile Court, Community School programs, and Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Formal staff development on various topics related to transition services for students with disabilities are available for LEAs, families, and other service providers.
 - Technical assistance relates assessment to classroom and community instruction. Linkages with other agencies results from development of a plan for coordinated services. Student and parent involvement is promoted during the planning and implementation of the transition process.
3. Staff development is provided through an extensive array of topics. Diagnostic School specialists provide half and full day workshops throughout the state. Many of the presentations are provided through the 12 Regional Coordinating Councils and are scheduled as a part of the council's training plan. Additional times are available for individual SELPAs or LEAs upon request. Training topics include: behavior, reading,

transition, early education, autism, classroom instruction, and other timely and current topics. The Diagnostic Center continues to provide up-to-date information on topics that are current and represent areas of need within the state.

Contact Information - State Special Schools and Southern California Diagnostic Center

For more information about the State Special Schools, visit the CDE web site at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/> or ask for more information from the members of the child's IEP team. Further information regarding State Special Schools and the Diagnostic Centers can be obtained from:

- Diagnostic Center, Southern California
4339 State University Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90032
(213) 222-8090
- Southern California Assessment Center for the Deaf
3044 Horrace Street
Riverside, CA 92505
(909) 782-6542
- California School for the Blind Assessment Center
500 Walnut Avenue
Fremont, CA 94536
(510) 794-3832